ERIC Document Resume	See Instruction Sheet	DATE OF RESUME	DATE RECEIVED

A. PUBLICATION DATA

1. ERIC NUMBER	2. ORIGINATOR CONTROL NO(S).	3. IDENTIFICATION NO.
ED001335	N.A.	N.A.

4. AUTHOR(S):
New York State Education Department

5. TITLE OF DOCUMENT ABSTRACTED:
Advanced Placement Program in French

6. PUBLICATION TITLE:
N.A.

7. EDITOR(S):
N.A.

8. PLACE OF ORIGIN
ORG. New York State Education Department, Bureau of Secondary Curriculum Development
ST. CITY, STATE Albany, New York

9. PUBLISHER OR SOURCE
New York State Education Department, Albany, New York

10. VOL.	11. PAGES	12. MO./YR.	13. TOTAL PP.
N.A.	N.A.	3/60	26

TELE. INST/LOC CODE EXT.

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TYPE OF REPORT
PROPOSAL ☐
IN-PROGRESS ☐
FINAL ☒
FOLLOW-UP ☐

OTHER ERIC REFERENCES:

ERIC SATELLITE CODE

B. INDEXING DATA

14. SUBJECT AREA

15. TYPE OF ENDEAVOR
report

16. INDEXING TERMS (6-12)

advanced placement	curriculum			
secondary schools	students, gifted			
French	teaching techniques			

17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

Specific course content should be determined by each school to achieve the goals expressed in the College Entrance Examination Board's Advanced Placement Program. Assistance in preparing such a course is offered.

Teachers as well as students should be specially qualified for this program. Preparation of the teacher of French should allow him to teach literature and culture on the college level. He should be fluent in French and be willing to devote extra time to this course.

The college-level work should be part of a well-planned sequential program of at least six years beginning in grade 7. Course content, method and expected levels of achievement are discussed. Reading should involve comprehension without translation. The class should be conducted only in French, with assignments in speech work of an advanced nature. The student should attain a high degree of proficiency in the areas of listening, comprehension, speaking, writing, reading, and literary analysis. An extensive reference list accompanies the text.

ERIC No.

18. SOURCE OF ABSTRACT

C. FUNDING DATA

19. SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION	20. DIVISION OR DEPT.	21. CONTRACT NO. / PROJECT NO.
	22. TOTAL COST OF PROJECT	
	23. DURATION OF PROJECT	U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare Office of Education

ERIC Form 1

ED001335 Adv. Pl. FR

ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM IN FRENCH

ED001335

New York State Education Department

Bureau of Secondary Curriculum Development

Albany, New York

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Preface

For a number of years, the State Education Department has encouraged and aided schools to make special provision for the education of gifted pupils. In accord with this policy, this Bureau is issuing a series of statements regarding possible advanced courses for the gifted in certain academic subjects of which French is one.

Other advanced placement program statements in the series are those for English, American History, Mathematics and Chemistry.

The basic material for the suggestions given on the following pages was drawn from the Advanced Placement Program Syllabus (1958), published by the College Entrance Examination Board. The initial step in preparation of the manuscript was the formation of an advisory committee which included Helen Bailey of Barnard College, Dora Bashour of Hunter College, Margaret Bradshaw of Midwood High School (Brooklyn), Esther Eaton of Garden City High School (now with the U. S. Office of Education), Daniel Girard of Teachers College, Columbia University and Genevieve Hare of Manhasset High School.

After the committee conferred, Miss Bradshaw and Miss Eaton wrote a first draft of the manuscript. This was further revised and rewritten by Mary E. Hayes, associate in foreign language education and Richard G. Decker, associate in secondary curriculum, both in the State Education Department, working under the guidance of Paul M. Glaude, supervisor of foreign languages education. Assistance with the bibliography was given by Remunda Cadoux of Sheepshead Bay High School (Brooklyn), consultant in French and Spanish for the Bureau.

The manuscript was read and approved by Elbert K. Fretwell, Jr., Assistant Commissioner for Higher Education.

Gordon E. Van Hooft
Chief, Bureau of Secondary
Curriculum Development

Ernest A. Frier
Director, Division of
Secondary Education

March 1960

THE ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM IN NEW YORK STATE

One practice that has proven effective in some schools has been the provision of college-level courses in the twelfth grade for the most able and ambitious secondary school students. This bulletin is one of a series designed to encourage high schools to offer such courses, which may indeed warrant advanced placement or credit upon college entrance.

Like the advanced placement statements in English, American History, Chemistry and Mathematics, this bulletin shows the relationship between the State syllabus for the high school grades and the advanced course material which must be offered to qualify pupils to take the advanced placement examinations that are offered by the College Entrance Examination Board.

The New York State Education Department is indebted to this Board, particularly those staff members who have charge of the advanced placement examinations and who have served as consultants on our advanced course committees.

This statement was prepared by the Curriculum Bureau of the Secondary Education Division and with the cooperation and counsel of the higher education authorities in the Department.

Walter Crewson

Walter Crewson
Associate Commissioner of Education

Organization of Advanced Courses

Introduction

The course in French described here is a college-level course and is designed for the student gifted in foreign language who intends to seek advanced placement in his freshman year in college by taking the examination given by the Advanced Placement Program. The goals of an Advanced Placement Course are so rigorous that this Department does not recommend that a school offer such a course unless its students are following a full six-year sequence in the language.

In specifying a college-level course in French one is confronted by the fact that among colleges there is no single pattern for such a college course, either in content or achievement. It is the responsibility of each school, therefore, to determine the specific content of the course to achieve the goals expressed in the Advanced Placement Program Syllabus. The Department has prepared this statement to assist schools in planning such a course.

The secondary schools may wish to develop college-level courses for gifted students whether the students intend to seek advanced placement in college by taking the examination given by the Advanced Placement Program of the College Entrance Examination Board or whether they are seeking enrichment of their high school studies. Qualified pupils should be encouraged to take the APP examination. It is advisable, also, that they ascertain from the college of their choice the policy of the college in regard to accelerated or advanced placement programs. The fact that a high school student has completed a year's work in an advanced course in the high school does not necessarily mean that a college will grant advanced placement or college credit to the student. It is to be noted that the examination part of the Advanced Placement Program is open to any student whether or not he has taken a special course. School personnel who are interested in the Advanced Placement Program should consult the Advanced Placement Program Syllabus, College Entrance Examination Board, 1958.

Selection of Students

There will be a very small percentage of the student body capable of undertaking a college-level course. It is generally estimated that on a national basis the gifted will constitute about 3 per cent of a high school enrollment. The percentage would vary with the type of community served by the school. It is important that the identification and selection of the able and ambitious pupil in the foreign language field be made as early as possible. Selection of students for the college-level course should be based on a group of criteria. Teachers who know the students are asked to make recommendations. Those recommended are invited to apply for the courses. Parent consent is usually asked, not only because the courses involve a certain outlay of money, but also because the parent, who knows best the child's plans and outside schedule, can judge whether so demanding a course can be managed. School records are consulted; intelligence quotients, results of standardized tests, attendance records, and relative standing in class must be considered. It is especially important that the student's general scholastic achievement be high so that his work in other subjects may not suffer because of the demands of this one. The school would take into account any experience in the language in elementary school. Guidance counselors and teachers are consulted not only on academic standing, but on general adjustment. Has the student the maturity, emotional balance, and health to undertake a difficult program? Has he good work habits? Are home conditions such as will permit him to work as many hours as college work demands?

It is impossible, of course, to stipulate a minimum I.Q. or class average for the candidate; these will depend in great measure on the school. Most important, perhaps, is the factor of eagerness to take the course - not so much for the credit, but to work on a high level. Such eagerness indicates a conscious need and readiness for a more challenging course of study. Often the student who has this readiness will show evidence of it in other ways. He is likely to have read widely and to know well certain of the classics. Where the opportunity exists, he will have had contact with theaters, opera, museums, lectures; he might be a collector of stereophonic recordings or a leader of school activities. In effect, he is intellectually active and has begun to be a person of culture.

Selection of Teachers

Teachers as well as students must be specially qualified for this program if it is to be successful. The selection of the teacher is governed by the interest of the teacher in the program, his eagerness to work on the college level, the preparation he has had in literature and his general command of the language. It is important that the teacher and the administration anticipate the need for devoting extra time to this course. The teacher should be one who enjoys reading and who appreciates poetry and literary criticism. The teacher must realize that this course goes beyond the high school level in the reading of French literature and that emphasis is now placed upon critical analysis of literary works requiring mature response on the part of the student.

Administration of the Course

If college-level work is given in the high school it should be part of a well-planned sequential program of at least six years beginning in Grade 7. Ideally, college-level courses should be preceded by courses for the gifted for one or two years previous to entering the college-level course. This is not ordinarily practicable in the area of foreign languages except in the very large schools. However, when a preparatory sequence for the most able pupils cannot be scheduled, the teacher can provide these individuals with the necessary extra assignments and challenging experiences in the regular French classes at this level under two conditions. The teacher must be willing to undertake the additional preparation and the administration must provide a reduced work-load to compensate for the extra preparation.

One practical and effective way of introducing college-level courses in large high schools is the formation of a special class of students screened and qualified for a college-level course.

On the other hand, in schools where there is a small student population with resulting small registration in language courses, it could be impracticable, if not impossible, to schedule an extra class for college-level work. In this instance, neighboring schools

could cooperate in forming one class in one of the schools to receive students from the other schools. A third way of introducing the course has been tried. The exceptionally able and ambitious students are placed in the regular French 4 class and provided with extra assignments and tutorial help. However, it must be remembered that, in this plan, the work of the student must be given special attention by the teacher. The student will also work in great part under his own initiative and responsibility on his college-level assignments. Naturally, to be successful, this arrangement requires frequent individual conferences between teacher and student. It also requires an additional preparation by the teacher. This extra work should not be undertaken by either student or teacher unless the work-load of both is otherwise lightened.

As indicated before, it is important that the teacher and the administration anticipate the need for devoting extra time to this course. Conference-time should not be the gift of the teacher. In many schools, conference-time replaces such non-teaching assignments as study-hall and cafeteria supervision. The teacher's schedule might well provide a period designated for conferences and the necessary extra preparation.

There are, then, at present these three ways of including advanced courses in the student's program. Of the three, the ideal procedure is, of course, the first one mentioned; namely, the special class composed of students doing advanced work under the leadership of an eager, able teacher interested in teaching on the college level and with knowledge of the attendant techniques. This is a class in college-level French, not a high-school-level class. It must, therefore, have the point of view and embody the techniques employed in a college class as specified in the section on content.

Even with optimum programming conditions, advanced classes must be kept small as compared with high school classes. Some schools restrict registration to fewer than twenty students.

Content, Method and Evaluation

Differences between high school courses and college-level courses may be found in content, certain aspects of method, and, of course, in achievement expected of the student. In the sections which follow, specific differences will be discussed.

Objectives

There are two basic objectives of the course; namely, knowledge of the language, and knowledge of the literature and culture. The content of an advanced placement course, therefore, should be geared to the attainment of these basic aims. An able student in the language who has followed a six-year sequential program is expected by his senior year to have attained the necessary skills for entering upon college-level work. Upon completion of the advanced course, he should have attained, as stated in the Advanced Placement Program Syllabus, an ability "to understand what an educated native French speaker says when he is speaking at normal speed on a subject not unduly specialized" and an ability to "speak with an acceptable pronunciation and with a command of vocabulary and syntax sufficient for sustained conversation on a general subject." The pupil should be able to write clearly with vocabulary suitable for his subject, and with idiomatic structure. He should be able to compose an informal but well-ordered narration, description or essay; and to read and comprehend at sight prose and verse of moderate difficulty and mature content. With the aid of dictionaries and reference books, he should comprehend any material within the range of his general knowledge. He will have attained a certain knowledge of French history and culture which has been developed throughout the sequence.

The following quotation from the Advanced Placement Program Syllabus gives a general description of the content in regard to literature and culture: "Knowledge of the literature and culture involves an acquaintance with representative works significant for their content and literary values and the ability to read with understanding and appreciation. The student should be able to

comprehend the situations, emotions, ideas, and implications of works which might be read in a college course in literature and to relate such works to their historical and cultural setting. In doing so he should be aware of the distinctive contributions of France to Western civilization and of the principal resemblances and differences between French patterns of life and thought and our own."

Listening and Speaking

It can be expected that only the French language will be used in conducting an Advanced Placement class. It must be assumed, therefore, that the students will have had adequate training in the aural-oral aspects of the language in their previous years of study. However, the teacher could use English on specific occasions when the use of English is judged necessary for clarification.

In general, all the aural-oral skills will continue to be strengthened to the point where the students are fully capable of engaging in a sustained conversation on a general subject. The active vocabulary will be extended to include new words and expressions related to the critical study of literature and of the history and culture of France (as described in the sections which follow).

Class work and assignments will include speech work of an advanced nature that might not have been experienced in the previous years. For example, students might be expected to give "platform" talks on topics related to the literature, history, or culture of France, and to engage in panel discussions or in conversations involving situations requiring a greater facility and vocabulary than in previous years.

Instructional situations and devices similar to those described in the State Syllabus and the Handbook may be carried on, but with a higher level of achievement expected. Such situations could include "telephone" conversations, role playing, presentation of short plays or scenes from longer works, oral presentation of poetry or poetic prose that has been memorized, listening to lectures by the teacher or by a visiting lecturer who is a native of France, viewing French sound motion pictures, listening to French recordings of plays, poetry and prose

readings, and visiting advanced classes in French at neighboring colleges. Students should have experiences involving tests on listening comprehension. Teachers can devise various kinds of written tests evaluating students' understanding of a conversation, a reading, or a lecture on which notes may be taken.

Students at one school undertook a series of lessons to be conducted by students once a week in the French class. Using the French language, they presented lessons in such subjects as mathematics, science, citizenship education, music and home economics.

One student taught two lessons in calculus using a French mathematics textbook. The student provided his classmates with a list of words related to mathematics and explained in French the solution of two problems. Members of the class asked questions and worked out similar problems which were explained by certain of the students.

Two science majors performed a Lavoisier experiment in class. One of them gave an oral summary of the life and accomplishments of Lavoisier and the other wrote a list of related key words on the chalkboard. The lesson ended with a discussion of French scientists.

Note-taking from an oral presentation is an important skill to be practised, not only for its value in immediate use in the class, but also because the Advanced Placement Program examination has included a listening comprehension question utilizing the application of this skill.

Use will be made of audiovisual materials and language laboratory equipment. It is assumed that in many schools the students have been accustomed to the use of such materials and equipment in their previous study. Thus, they might be largely self-directed in their use of these aids. The teacher should have available tape recordings and other materials of a level of difficulty suitable for these gifted students. The availability of a language laboratory enables the student to spend more time in extending, supplementing, and enriching the work of the classroom.

Reading and Literature

A basic aim at all levels in the study of reading in accordance with modern concepts of language learning is comprehension without translation. This aim, of course, is to be maintained in the Advanced Placement Course. The basic reading skills are assumed to have been mastered by these gifted students. Their ability to read with facility will be strengthened by their experiences in reading extensively and intensively a variety of materials. Such reading will include current French newspapers and magazines as well as works of literature in a variety of forms - fiction, essays, poetry, drama, biography, and history. From these readings and from other experiences, the students will acquire a more extensive knowledge of the cultural aspects of France and its people.

In a college-level course, a major emphasis is placed on the study of literature as such. Both extensive and intensive reading of literature are done by the class. By the use of precis writing, lectures by the teacher, note-taking, discussion and explication de textes, the student develops techniques and skills for critical analysis of literary works. The student learns to recognize the authors' main ideas and themes. He learns not only that what is being said is important, but also how it is said. He becomes aware of the various aspects of style - the use of figures of speech, rhythmic patterns, balance, repetition, tonal values, and diction. He reads not only to comprehend the content but to gain an understanding and appreciation of form, mood, and emotions and the means used to evoke the moods and emotions. He becomes aware of the subtleties of character through character analysis, noting such effects as growth and change and the interplay between one character and another.

Where applicable, the study of a work should bring to bear necessary information of the author's life and times, the environmental factors of the time and place in the work itself, and comparisons of the work with others by the author or comparable works of other writers.

One important and commonly used method of close, analytical reading to be practiced both by the teacher and by the students is explication de textes (often

called explication française). It is generally applied to certain key passages in a work. No explication should be assigned until the teacher has presented one or two as models for the pupils. Some should then be assigned as written work. Subsequently, pupils may be assigned different passages from time to time and asked to present a fifteen-to twenty-minute oral explication, with classmates taking notes.

A number of experiences with this sort of exercise should equip a person not only for understanding and increased appreciation of what he reads, but also with some experience in determining the elements of literary composition. The teacher, however, should not apply explication de textes except to a limited number of passages sufficient to introduce the student to this method of close reading. The scope of content of the course does not allow time for its extensive use.

An extended description of explication de textes is not necessary here, but the following summary suggests certain procedures and elements to be considered in the analysis of a passage. Those who wish to explore the method further will find helpful references in the Teachers' Bibliography on page 17.

The first step, preparatory to the actual explication, is to read the passage aloud with expression suitable for communicating the mood and illuminating the meaning. The reader must be careful, however, not to use an exaggerated, declamatory style of reading.

The explication can be thought of as falling into three divisions: relation of the selection to its context and general background; analysis of the emotions and ideas expressed; attention to the structure and the style so as to gain an appreciation and understanding of the whole selection.

Consideration of the context and background of the selection would include the title, date, type, and subject of the work. A statement about the author and his times should include only the information necessary to increase the comprehension of the selection. However, a detailed knowledge of the author's personal life, his other literary work and his times is necessary in most cases for a good explication de textes.

The next phase, that is, the analysis of the emotions and ideas, requires attentive and minute examination of each sentence and almost each word. The reader first of all must understand the exact meanings of words, phrases, and the sentence. He must seek to discover that which is special in the language, the syntax, and, in the case of poetry, the versification. He must be aware of the use of figures of speech, and the symbolic use of objects and actions. In respect to words, the reader considers their derivation, the possible choices among synonyms, the level of usage indicated, word relationships, and connotations. In addition he must ask himself how he must think of an idea or an emotion -- from what viewpoint, with what attitude. All this is a search for clues to the meaning, mood, emotions and viewpoint of the writer.

Students who are not used to reading in this way need help from the teacher, first by several examples of explication by the teacher. The works studied are those which can be read in depth. The meaning of a fable, an essay, or a poem may seem obvious to the unpracticed reader who simply does not know how to pick up the clues that will, one-by-one, reveal a hidden meaning. Students must be aided in discovering difficulties until they become habituated to exploring beneath the surface.

Following the analysis, the teacher (and, after practice, the student) can comment on what he knows and thinks about the ideas, the descriptions, the opinions, the characters, situations, and so forth.

In the final phase the structure and style are viewed with the intention of discovering their relation to the meaning and mood. This overall view, together with the previous analysis of the other elements, leads then to an impression of the whole selection.

A knowledge of the literature can be best realized through a reading program extending over at least two years. This can be done in schools that can follow the suggestion given earlier in regard to early identification and preparation of students gifted in language. The Advanced Placement Program Syllabus lists some of the authors and works which might form the core of this two-year reading program consisting of a survey of French literature from the Middle Ages to the present day. If the advanced course must be completed in one year, the emphasis should be placed upon works of the seventeenth,

eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Even the able and ambitious student cannot be expected to accomplish the impossible and to read the French literature of seven hundred years in one year! Even when readings are restricted to the last three centuries, it is advisable that some of the reading be started in the eleventh grade and continued during the summer vacation. Many colleges require a survey course of all freshmen as a prerequisite for a further study of French literature. In such a college course the student may be held responsible for reading a number of representative works of French literature from the Middle Ages to the present, and this coverage is advocated in the Advanced Placement Program as well.

The level of the suggested literature is indicated by the authors represented, which include as the most important for the reading program selected works by such authors as Villon, Montaigne, Corneille, Pascal, Molière, Racine, La Fontaine, Voltaire, Marivaux, Rousseau, Beaumarchais, Lamartine, Vigny, Musset, Hugo, Balzac, Stendhal, Baudelaire, Flaubert, Rimbaud, Mallarmé, Gide, Claudel, St-Exupéry, Giraudoux, and Anouilh.

Lists of works suggested for an advanced course may be found in the Advanced Placement Program Syllabus and in the Reports of the Working Committees of the 1957 Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages ($1.00). Copies of this volume may be obtained from Professor Nelson Brooks, MAT Program, Yale University, New Haven.

Culture of France and its People

Acquaintance with the culture of the French people is not something to be gained from factual lists or review books. Actually, the language itself is a major aspect of the culture. The various facets of life which comprise the civilization and culture of the people become evident through the daily use and study of the language and the literature. Certain specific classroom activities related to the study of the culture may be used occasionally. Teachers may present talks to the class; and, as in French classes at all levels, holidays, songs, films and slides furnish valuable means of integrating French culture with the study of the language and the literature. Visits to museums and to French restaurants,

plays and concerts are productive cultural contacts. Television and radio provide worthwhile programs. Many students subscribe to a French newspaper or magazine. First-hand contact with French culture may be attained through correspondence with French students and through an exchange of cultural materials with schools in France. In the advanced class in some schools each student must have presented by the end of the second semester a paper which represents individual research on a cultural subject of major interest to him. Students might combine this work with source themes for English or Citizenship Education.

Composition

Knowledge of the language includes the ability to write clearly and correctly in French.

It is not to be expected that, in a college-level course, much class time will need to be spent in the basic mechanics of writing. Gifted students will have correlated the different skills of hearing, speaking, reading and writing so that they can use these skills as a multiple tool for communication. However, the teacher will require correctness of written expression and will assist individual pupils to overcome persistent faults.

The content of the college-level course does not include a study of formal grammar as such. It is assumed that these able and ambitious students have mastered the fundamentals of French structure. However, especially to meet the demands of the written language, they should know how to use a reference grammar. Therefore, a reference grammar, like a dictionary, should be one of the available reference tools.

Practice may be given in various forms of writing such as narration, description of people or places, personal essays, exposition and argumentation. Some imaginative writing may be done, but factual material presented in the forms of description, exposition or argumentation, imposes a greater discipline in logical thinking and orderly presentation.

To be avoided are a rambling style and meaningless repetition so often associated with filling space. In

all writing, quality rather than quantity is the goal. Perhaps the chief quality to be striven for is clarity. To be able to write convincingly the student must know his topic and know how to present it. As in his English classes, he should write well-ordered paragraphs and unified compositions. His ideas should be developed within a logical structure, identifying main topics and their supporting details, the whole progressing from point to point with a sense of purpose.

Many pieces of writing will grow from the study of literature and of the history and culture of the people. General topics might be chosen, however, especially at the beginning of the year. As mentioned previously, students might eventually undertake a source theme on a literary or cultural topic. Another occasion for writing about literature is found in undertaking the exercises previously mentioned in connection with explication de textes.

Translation from the foreign language to English, according to current thinking, is not advocated as a teaching-learning device, but occasionally may be a useful testing device, at this level of language achievement. Good translations of literature require the language skills of an expert who has the necessary knowledge and perception. Nevertheless, if a student aims to take the Advanced Placement Examination, which might include a question requiring translation, a certain amount of time in a college-level course might be devoted to this skill. The teacher, however, must limit translation judiciously lest the process interfere with the habit of thinking and reading in the language without conscious reference to English.

Some Useful References for Teachers

Note: For the names and addresses of publishers in France and some sources of French books in the United States, see lists following the bibliography.

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